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U. S. Department of Agriculture

HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: Fruit Butters" Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A.

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When you've made your apple or grape jelly this fall, or when you've put up your supply of fruit juice, what will you do with the fruit pulp that's left? Discard it? Not you--if you're thrifty. You'll save that pulp and press it through a sieve to remove the seeds and skins. Then you'll convert it into that delicious spread known as fruit butter. Nothing better that I know of for hot biscuits on Sunday night, for the children's sandwiches or even to serve with meat at dinner.

Fruit butter is an economy product for several reasons. You can make it, as we said, from the pulp left after the fruit juice is extracted. And you can also make it from the sound parts of fruits not perfect enough for canning. It is easy to make, keeps well and is sure to be popular with the family.

What is ideal fruit butter like? It is smooth, somewhat stiff but will not stand alone as jelly does. It is glossy and has color and the original flavor of the fruit. Some fruit butter is spiced. Some is flavored only with sugar and the natural fruit flavor.

From old times apple butter has been a great favorite. But grapes, peaches, pears, plums, guavas and even tomatoes will also make good butter. Then, combinations of fruit will make delicious butter. Apple and peach butter, apple and grape butter, apple and huckleberry and so on. Apple pulp combines well with other fruits and extends them without much affecting their color and flavor. And the pectin in the apple pulp gives a good texture to butter made from peaches, apricots or other fruits that lack pectin.

Before you start making up your supply of fruit butter, of course, you'll want to get out the equipment needed for the job. If you're putting up small quantities, just enough for the family, you'll need only your everyday kitchen utensils, a big preserving kettle, a colander, a wire sieve, a potato masher and measuring cups, knives and pans.

Every now and then out through the country you still see apple butter made as it used to be in old times, over an open fire in a great iron and copper kettle.

In general this is the way you make the butter. You cut up the fruit and cook it with water until tender. Then you put it through a sieve or a strainer. Some people strain the fruit through a colander but this doesn't give a fine smooth product. When the pulp is strained, measure it and add one-half or three-fourths as much sugar as fruit and spice it, if you like. The amount of sugar depends on how tart the fruit is. Cook the mixture rapidly until it is thick and somewhat clear. A little salt will bring out the flavor.

Because fruit butters are thick, they scorch very easily on the bottom of the kettle. So you need to give them constant attention and frequent stirring as they cook. Putting an asbestos mat under the kettle helps prevent scorching.

The specialists say that long, slow cooking darkens the color of the fruit butter and destroys some of the original fruit flavor. So they advise cooking rapidly, just as you do in making preserves, and being very careful about scorching.

Now about making apple butter from fruit which has been used for jelly. After one extraction of the juice has been made and if the pulp left in the jelly bag is very thick, add water, heat it for a few minutes and pass it through a sieve. Then follow the regular procedure for making fruit butter.

Before you put the butter up in jars, be sure it is boiling all the way through. Fruit butter has a deceptive way of bubbling in the center of the kettle when it may be quite cold around the edges.

I'd like to give you several good fruit butter recipes and time keeps on flying and we still have a menu to include on the program today. So, if you'll find a pencil, I'll give you, right now, a recipe for one of the best fruit butters I know of.

Grape butter requires:

- 2 quarts of grape pulp
- 1 quart of sugar
- 1 and 1/2 teaspoons of cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon of allspice
- 1/2 teaspoon of salt

I'll repeat those five ingredients. (Repeat.)

Press the pulp through a fine sieve to remove the seeds and skins. Mix all the ingredients and boil rapidly until thick. Stir, of course, to prevent scorching. Then seal in sterilized jars, label your jars and store them in a cool place.

Now we're ready to plan our economy dinner for today.

We haven't had spareribs since way back last winter some time. So let's have baked spareribs for this meal. If you want to be a little more elaborate about your meat dish you might serve the roast stuffed spareribs described in the pork leaflet.

Baked spareribs, then; next succotash; then, hot cabbage slaw; and for dessert, fresh Concord grapes and coffee.

If ever there was a real American dish, it's succotash. The work comes from the Indians and so does the dish. According to the history books, the Indians taught the early settlers how to combine corn and beans in this way, and the dish has been a favorite fall food ever since.

For good succotash you'll need just five ingredients.

1 pint of shelled lima beans
4 ears of corn or 2 cups of corn cut from the cob
1/2 cup of cream or rich milk
2 tablespoons of butter or other fat, and
salt.

I'll repeat that list. (Repeat.)

Simmer the beans in a small quantity of lightly salted water until almost tender. In the meantime use a sharp knife to trim off the tops of the corn kernels and scrape out the pulp with the back of the knife. Mix the corn with the beans, add the cream or milk and cook for 10 minutes until there is no starchy flavor in the corn. Add the fat and enough salt to season. Then serve.

This is a good way to use up left-over corn and cooked beans. You simply combine them with cream or milk and seasoning and heat them to the boiling point before serving.

Cold slaw is such a popular dish that sometimes we forget that hot slaw also exists and is one of the best of cabbage dishes. You simply shred the cabbage fine, then pour hot highly seasoned dressing over it and stir until it is well-mixed. You'll find a good receipt for the slaw dressing in your green cookbook on page 44.

Once more, our menu is: Baked spareribs; Succotash; Hot slaw; Concord grapes; and Coffee.

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Tomorrow, I'll answer requests for two historical recipes - Jefferson Davis pie and Nancy Hanks pickles.

